



## Athlete Profile (National)

**John Bennett**  
**Combat-Wounded Army Veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom**  
**38 years old**  
**Cascade, Montana**

Playing sports has always come naturally to John Bennett, a former high school athlete who played basketball, softball and football. His skills were evident at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Spokane last year, where he won a gold medal in track and a bronze in nine-ball.

In 2005, while serving in Iraq, Bennett was shot by a sniper while watching over the site of a possible IED. After undergoing several operations and lots of rehabilitation, the support he received from his wife and four children gave him the strength he needed to compete again.

Bennett currently coaches the Cascade High School girl's basketball team, and he looks forward to getting out at this year's Wheelchair Games so he can hit the courts alongside other Veterans with disabilities.

Being at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games has shown him that no matter your condition, you can still compete. Bennett hopes that other Veterans will also be encouraged to compete, because he knows that it brings back a better quality of life and makes him feel like an athlete once again.

**"The National Veterans Wheelchair Games is a wonderful event, not just for the athletes but for everyone who attends," said Bennett. "To see all the people with disabilities competing in sports at such a high level is just incredible."**

